

Message Text

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ACTION AF-04

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R 271630Z DEC 74

FM AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4844

INFO US MISSION GENEVA 0258

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE

C O N F I D E N T I A L YAOUNDE 4183

LIMDIS FOR AF/C, SCS/VO, S/R

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SREF, CVIS, PFOR, CF, CM, US

SUBJECT: QUERY ABOUT REFUGEE IN US FOR CONGO POLITICAL OPPOSITIONIST

1. SUMMARY: UNDP OFFICER HAS APPROACHED EMBOFF INFORMALLY RE POSSIBILITY ADMISSION INTO US OF "POLITICALLY HOT" CONGOLESE REFUGEE CURRENTLY IN CAMEROON WHO THREATENED WITH FORCIBLE RETURN TO CONGO OR OTHER DIRE FATE. EMBASSY REQUESTS GUIDANCE RE RESPONSE.

2. UNDP OFFICER INQUIRED OF EMBOFF AT RECEPTION ABOUT POSSIBILITY ADMISSION TO US OF CONGO (B) REFUGEE CURRENTLY ON HANDS OF UNDP YAOUNDE ON BEHALF UNHCR WHICH NOT DIRECTLY REPRESENTED IN CAMEROON. ACCORDING TO INFO PROVIDED, REFUGEE IS FORMER CONGOLESE ARMY LIEUTENANT INVOLVED IN UNSUCCESSFUL LEFTIST COUP ATTEMPT AGAINST NGOUABI REGIME OVER YEAR AGO. HE WAS CAPTURED AND IMPRISONED, ESCAPED SHORTLY THEREAFTER TO KINSHASA, AND ARRANGEMENTS HASTILY MADE BY UNHCR ZAIRE/UNDP CAMEROON TO MOVE HIM TO CAMEROON WHERE HE GRANTED TEMPORARY ASYLUM ON CONDITION HE NOT ENGAGE IN POLITICAL ACTIVITY (A CONDITION HE HAS REPEATEDLY VIOLATED). HE BEING HOUSED AND SUPPORTED BY UNHCR, WITH CONTRIBUTION ALSO BY CAMEROON GOVT (GURC). UNDP/UNHCR HAS FLOWN HIM TO BOTH FRANCE AND SWITZERLAND, CONFIDENTIAL

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BUT EACH TIME HE WAS REJECTED BY AUTHORITIES AND FORCED

TO RETURN TO CAMEROON. UNHCR GENEVA UNABLE FIND COUNTRY WILLING ACCEPT HIM (ALTHOUGH IT UNCLEAR HOW HARD UNHCR HAS TRIED). SITUATION HAS TAKEN "DESPERATE" TURN SINCE NGOUABI VISIT HERE FOR UDEAC CEREMONIES IN EARLY DECEMBER WHEN NGOUABI ALLEGEDLY OBTAINED AHIDJO'S AGREEMENT NOT TO PERMIT THIS ENEMY OF CONGOLESE REGIME TO REMAIN IN CAMEROON. GURC OFFICIALS HAVE GIVEN UNDP OFFICE UNTIL JANUARY 31, 1975, TO REMOVE THIS REFUGEE FROM CAMEROON, AFTER WHICH TIME THREAT MADE (OR IMPLIED) THAT HE WILL BE FORCIBLY REPATRIATED TO CONGO OR OTHERWISE BRUTALLY DISPOSED OF.

3. FROM STORY OUTLINED PARA 2, IT WOULD APPEAR (A) THAT CAMEROON WOULD BE VIOLATING ITS OBLIGATIONS UNDER INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION IF IT ACTED AS THREATENED, (B) UNHCR/UNDP WOULD HAVE TO PUT HARD PRESSURE ON CAMEROON TO RESPECT ITS OBLIGATIONS AND (C) PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY FOR FINDING REFUGEE NEW PERMANENT HOME SHOULD DEVOLVE ON UNHCR GENEVA RATHER THAN UNDP YAOUNDE (WHOSE CONTACTS LIMITED TO EMBASSIES THAT HAPPEN TO BE RESIDENT HERE).

4. DESPITE FOREGOING, UNDP HAS MADE IMFORMAL INQUIRY TO US TO WHICH RESPONSE EXPECTED BEYOND EMBOFF'S OFFHAND SKEPTICAL REACTION. LACK OF FURTHER RESPONSE WOULD LIKELY BE REPORTED TO UNHCR GENEVA AS US TURNDOWN. EMBASSY REALIZES DETAILS OF CASE AS REPORTED HERE ARE SPARSE, BUT CONSIDERS IT PRUDENT OBTAIN INITIAL DEPARTMENT GUIDANCE BEFORE SPEAKING AGAIN WITH UNDP OFFICER. AMONG OPTIONS WE CAN ENVISAGE ARE (A) INVITE UNDP TO ARRANGE FORMAL VISA APPLICATION ON WHICH WE WOULD REQUEST DEPARTMENT'S ADVISORY OPINION AS PER 9 FAM, APP. A, PART IV, 22 CFR 42.91(A)27, NOTE 3, (B) OBTAIN TRANSMISSION TO DEPT MORE DETAILED PERTINENT POLITICAL AND VISA INFO FROM UNDP OFFICER WITHOUT FORMAL VISA APPLICATION (C) ADVISE UNDP OFFICER TO REFER CASE TO UNHCR GENEVA FOR APPROACH TO US MISSION IF IT SO WISHES, (D) SIMPLY RESPOND THAT ON BASIS FACTS PRESENTLY KNOWN ADMISSION TO US NOT LIKELY BE POSSIBLE AND, HOPEFULLY, TURN OFF ANY FURTHER CONSIDERATION OF US AS PLACE OR REFUGE.

5. PLEASE ADVISE SOONEST.

6. SINCE APPROACH TO EMBOFF WAS INFORMAL, PREFER US MISSION GENEVA NOT RAISE SUBJECT WITH UNHCR.
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